A TESTIMONY

Againſt ſeveral Prophane and Superſtitious

CUSTOMS,

Now Practiſed by ſome in

New-England,

The Evil whereof is evinced from the Holy Scriptures, and from the Writings both of Ancient and Modern Divines.

By *Increaſe Mather*, Teacher of a Church in *Boſton*, and Rector of *Harvard* Colledge at *Cambridge* in *NEW-ENGLAND*.

They turned quickly out of the Way, which their Fathers walked, in Obeying the Commandment of the Lord; but they did not ſo, Judg. 2. 17.

The Cuſtoms of the People are Vain. Jer. 10. 3.

Ego (inquit Apoſtolus) *omnibus per omnia placeo. Nimirum Saturnalia, & Calendas Januarias celebrans, hominibus placebat? An Modeſtiâ, Patientiâ, an Humanitate, an Integritate Timent Gentes ne viderentur Chriſtiani. Nos ne Ethnici pronunciemur non veremur.* Tertullian *De Idololatr.* Cap. 14.

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BIBLIOTHECA · BODLEIANA

The Preface.

THE Holy Prophets of Old, did in a ſpecial manner Preach and Write againſt the prevailing Iniquities of the Age and place wherein they lived. And the Lord Jeſus has by his own moſt Holy Example taught his Miniſters to do the like. Yea, though they ſhould be expoſed to great Sufferings from the World on that account, having declared that it ſhall turn to them for a Teſtimony of their Faithfulneſs to Him, whoſe Servants and whoſe Witneſſes they are. Such like Conſiderations, have cauſed me to look upon it as my Duty, both Living and Dying, to enter my Humble Teſtimony for the the ways of Chriſt, and againſt thoſe things which I am Convinced are directly Oppoſite thereunto; and I have therefore Written what cometh hereafter. Since the Compoſure whereof, there is much diſcourſe of beginning of Stage-Plays in New-England. The laſt Year Promiſcuous Dancing was openly practiſed, and too much countenanced in this Degenerated Town. There was, in the day of it, a Teſtimony publiſhed againſt that Evil, by the Miniſters of Chriſt in this place; amongſt whom I am the leaſt. If we ſhould now behold things as bad or worſe coming in upon us, and be altogether ſilent, I know not how we ſhould be able to anſwer it to him, who has ſet us as Watchmen to the Houſe of Iſrael, and moſt ſolemnly charged us to ſhew unto them their Iniquities.

But as for Stage-Plays, the Evil thereof has been abundantly diſcovered by ſeveral of our Engliſh Writers; particularly by Mr. Stubbs, Mr. Perkins, Dr. Ames, and by Mr. Prin in his large and Elaborate Diſcourſe on that Subject; and Dr. John Rainolds (of whom Heylin himſelf confeſſes that he was περὶ πᾶν παιδευμένον, has a moſt Learned Treatiſe called, The Overthrow of Stage-Plays, wherein it is manifeſtly proved, That it is not only Unlawful to be an Actor, but a Beholder of thoſe Vanities. The Reader is refer'd to the Books mentioned for further ſatisfaction; I muſt but very briefly Suggeſt a few things here.

1. Stage-Plays had their Original from thoſe Devil-Gods whom the Gentiles Worſhiped. The Infernal Spirits did expreſly command that men ſhould uſe ſuch Recreations, which we may be ſure they would never have done, were not ſuch

Paſtimes diſpleaſing to God, and dangerous to the Souls of Men. Auſtin (de Civitate Dei Lib. 4. Cap. 26.) *Relates that* Titus Latinus *was by a* Dæmon *told that he ſhould declare to the Senate that they ought to renew their* Stage-Plays; *He neglecting to deliver his Meſſage, was again by the* Dæmon *called upon; and a Third time; the Iſſue was, that* Stage-plays *were revived more then ever.* Valeſius (*a rich* Roman) *having Prayed to his* Houſhold Gods *for the Recovery of his Children, who were dangerouſly ſick of the Peſtilence, he was by them bidden to give them Water to drink taken from beſide the Altar of* Pluto; *which having done, they recovered, and the Infernal Spirits required him in way of Gratitude to Celebrate* Night Plays. *See* Polydor. Virgil de Invent. Rerum, Lib. 4. Cap. 14. *But that* Scenical Interludes *had no better an Original then what has been mentioned, is further manifeſt from the Teſtimony of* Tertullian, de Spectaculis, Cap. 5. 7, 10, 24. Clemens Alexandrinus; Orat ad Gentes. Arnobius adverſus Gentes, Lib. 7. Lactantius de vero cultu Cap. 7. ac de Origine Erroris Cap. 8 Auſtin de Civitate Dei, Lib. 1. Cap. 32. Valerius Maximus, Lib. 12. Cap. 1. *Hence Ancients call ſuch* Theaters, *the* Devils Temples, *and* Stage Plays, *the* Devils Lectures, *and the Actors in them, the* Devils chief Factors. Tertullian *in his Book* de Spectaculis, Cap. 26. *ſpeaks of a Woman, that upon her going to ſee a* Stage Play *was immediately poſſeſſed with the Devil, and the Evil Spirit being in a way of Exorciſm Expoſtulated with, for Entring into one that profeſſed Chriſtianity, he anſwered that he had juſt cauſe to do it, for ſaid he,* In meo Inveni, *I found her in my own Ground, where I have Dominion.*

2. For Men who call themſelves Chriſtians, to do that which is contrary to their Vow in Baptiſm, muſt needs be very Evil. *But this is ſadly true concerning* Stage-Plays. *Baptized Perſons are under Obligation to renounce all the* Pomps of Satan; *and therefore to Abhor and Abandon* Stage-Plays, *which bear a principal part in the* Pomps the of Devil. *Thus* Salvian (de provid. Dei. Lib. 6.) *Argueth,* In *Stage-Plays* (ſaith he) there is an Apoſtaſy from the Faith, men in Baptiſm profeſs that they Renounce the *Devil,* his *Pomps* and *Shows*; The *Devil* is in his *Pomps* and *Plays.* If then thou doſt return to *Stage-Plays,* thou doſt leave the Faith of Chriſt, and return again to ſerve *Satan. Thus did that Faithful Miniſter of God Declare and Teſtify againſt the Degenerate Chriſtians of that Apoſtatizing Age wherein he lived. It has been prov'd*

that

that the Impleaded Interludes were at first Instituted for the honour of Idols, and they were a special part of the Old Ethnical Worship. *Hence for Christians to take them up, is practically to Renounce the Faith and Allegiance which they promised to the Lord in their Baptism.*

3. 'Tis the usual practice of *Stage-Players* to make themselves and others merry with the Vices and Wickednesses of men. *Now this is certainly Evil. To set forth Sin* Dramatically *or* Sportfully, *is inconsistent with that Sorrow for Sin, as Sin, which is every mans Duty. The Wickedness of other men is not to be named without detestation,* Ephesians 5. 3. Nor to be thought on without Sorrow, because of the dishonour which has been done to the Blessed Name of God thereby, *Psal.* 119, 136, 158. Wherefore to make such things a matter of Recreation and Delight, is as contrary to the Spirit of a true Christian, as Darkness is to Light.

4. The Natural Effects of *Stage-Plays* have been very pernicious. *Not to speak of the loss of precious Time, and of Estate, which might be better Improved; Multitudes (especially of Young Persons) have thereby been Corrupted and everlastingly Ruined. When they have seen a lively Representation of Wickedness on the Stage, their Minds have been Vitiated, and instead of learning to hate Vice (as is Vainly pretended) they have learned to practice it.* Seneca *could say that nothing has a greater tendency to Corrupt good Manners, then to be at these* Spectacles. *It's a sad Observation which some have made, that Persons who have been Corrupted by* Stage-Plays, *are seldom, and with much difficulty Reclaimed. A more woful and effectual Course to Debauch the Young Generation, Satan himself cannot easily devise. I remember* Austin *in his* Confession (Lib. 6. Cap. 8.) *Reports concerning* Alipius *(a very hopeful Young Man whom he had a great Affection for)* That he was much Importuned by some of his Acquaintance, to go along with them to see a *Sword-Play.* He at first denied to go along with them, but at last to please them he consented; only resolved that he would keep his Eyes shut as long as he continued on the Stage: but one of the Fencers being smitten so as to fall, the Spectators gave a shout, at the hearing of which, *Alipius* opened his Eyes. And then (saith *Austin*) he was struck with a deeper Wound in his Soul, then the other was in his Body; so that he fell more miserably then the *Sword-Player* had done, whose fall caused the mighty shout of the People. He no sooner saw another Mans Blood,

but at the very Instant drank down a kind of *Savageness*; being much taken with the Barbarousness of the *Sword-Fight*, and made Drunk with that Bloody Pastime. Nor was he now the Man he was when he first came thither, but became an entire Companion of them, who brought him to the Theater. He was so Inflamed with it, and carried home with him such a measure of Madness, as that he came another time, nay ran before them who first enticed him, and haled on others to do so too. And in this course continued a long time, but God was pleased at last by a strong and merciful Hand to Convert him. *Thus far is* Austins *Relation, by which we see how dangerous it is for Persons (especially young Ones) to go to a* Stage-Play, *or to behold a* Sword-Fight; *God may be provoked thereby to give them up to walk in the ways of their Heart, and in the sight of their Eyes. The Emperour* Honorius *abolish'd all the* Gladiators *or* Sword-Players *in* Rome. *See* Grymstons *Imperial History*, P. 273.

5. The generality of good Men, both in former and in latter Ages, have looked ugon *Stage-Plays* as abominable Vanities. *The Fathers (as they are called) do with one Voice vehemently Condemn them.* Clemens Alexandrinus *would have the very memory of* Stage-Plays *to be abolished, and he stiles them the* Chairs of Pestilence, *and concludes that it is not Lawful for Christians to be present at such Plays.* Lactantius *saith of them,* That they are the greatest Instigations to Vice, and the most Powerful Instrument to corrupt the minds of Men, and ought therefore to be wholy abolish'd amongst Christians. Hierom *declared concerning them,* That they are lewd Inventions, by which the Devil useth to gain innumerable companies of Evil Men to himself: *And he saith,* That in places where the Gospel prevailed, *Stage-Plays* and *Play-Houses* went down; *whence the Heathen complained of the Times of Christianity as unhappy Times.* Chrysostom *saith,* That nothing brings the Ordinances of God into Contempt so much as these Plays, and that Gods Ordinances will do the Man no good, that shall be a *Spectator* of such Vanities. *But I forbear mentioning other Testimonies against the Impleaded Interludes. Not to be present at a* Stage-Play, *was of old a Character of a Christian, whereby such were discerned from other Men.* V. Tertullian de Spectaculis, Cap. 24. 38, 42. *And* Austin de Symbolo ad Catechum. Lib. 4. Cap. 1. *In those days they would not Baptize any Person, that should be so much as a Beholder, much less one that should be an Actor*

in

in a Stage-Play. *Yea, if Chriſtians did afford their preſence at ſuch* Stage-Plays, *they were by the Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitutions judged as guilty of a Crime deſerving no leſs then Excommunication. V.* Clement. Conſtitut. Apoſtol. Lib. 8. Cap. 32. *In the Council at* Arles *in* France, Anno. 314. *And in the* Eleberine *Council in* Spain, Anno. 305, *it is decreed that* Stage-Players *ſhall be Excommunicated out of the Society of Chriſtians. The like is to be ſeen in many other Ancient Councils, which for Brevities ſake I Omit. As for* Pagano-Chriſtians, *as Dr.* More *rightly calls them (I mean* Papiſts) *they Excuſe, plead for, and practiſe theſe Vanities. Nevertheleſs, amongſt them* Bonaventure, Cellotius, *and* Rovenius *reflect upon* Hiſtrionical Plays *as Evil things. Nay, the Council of* Trent *does not abſolutely, but with ſome Reſtrictions approve of them. Since the Reformation, Proteſtant Divines have abundantly Teſtified againſt ſuch Recreations, as in themſelves Evil. So* Martyr, Aretius, Danæus, Rivet, *and many others. In the Diſcipline of the Reformed Churches in* France, Anno. 1571. *I find theſe Words,* It ſhall not be Lawful to aſſiſt at Comedies, Tragedies, and other Interludes, Plays of Manners, and other Plays repreſented publickly or privately, becauſe at all times they have been prohibited amongſt Chriſtians as cauſing Corruption of good Manners.

In a National Synod at Dort *in* Holland, Anno. 1578. *and in ſeveral Provincial Councils there, ſuch Interludes are condemned.* Voetius (in Diſput. Select. Part. 4. Page 376) *Declares that* Stage-Plays *had been quite Baniſhed out of the City of* Utreck, *and other places, and not practiſed for many Years; Yet that ſome of the* Senators *did againſt the ſerious and ſolemn obteſtations of Chriſts Miniſters, ſuffer them to be revived,* Anno. 1663. *And he ſaith, that thoſe* Comedies *were forerunners of the Diſmal* Tragedies *which followed within two Years after in reſpect of the Sword and Peſtilence, wherewith the Land was viſited. The Lord in Mercy grant that* New-England *may never ſee* Comedies *attended with the like* Tragedies.

But if I ſhould Enlarge on theſe things, this Porch *would be too big for the ſmall Building it ſtands before. Nevertheleſs, the Talk which paſſeth amongſt ſome Vain Perſons, concerning a* May-Pole *which they intended to ſet up when the Time ſhall come, conſtrains me to add one word concerning that. Theſe Sports are the very ſame with the Old Heathens,* Antheſtiſia, Floralia, *or* Laurentinalia, *which ſome Chriſtian Emperours*

did utterly aboliſh. They are obſerved not only after the ſame manner, but at the ſame time of the Year with the Pagan Floralia; *which had from the time of their Celebration the Name of* Majuma, *or* May-Games, *given to them. Hence is that of the Poet,* Exit et in Majas Feſtum Florale Calendas. Ovid. Faſt. Lib. 4. *The beſt Authors give this account concerning* May-Poles, *and the Plays attending them,* There was a prodigious Strumpet, whoſe Name was *Flora*, who by Harlotry had gained a vaſt ſum of Money. She bequeathed her whole Eſtate ſo Infamouſly gotten, to the People of *Rome*, only deſired, and it was agreed to by the *Senat*, that once in a Year *(viz.* in the Month of *May)* Plays and Dances might be inſtituted in Honour to that great Whore. *This is the Original of* May-Games. *And from hence is it, that* May-Poles *are adorned with* Flowers *and* Garlands. *See* Lactantius de falſa Religione, Lib. 1. Polydor. Virgil. Lib. 5. Cap. 2. Holpinian de Origine Feſtorum, p. 88. *It would cauſe me too far to exceed the Limits of a* Preface, *if I ſhould produce the Teſtimonies of Ancient and Modern Divines againſt this wicked Vanity. I therefore deſiſt at preſent. It is an abominable ſhame, that any Perſons in a Land of ſuch Light and Purity as* New-England *has been, ſhould have the Face to ſpeak or think of practiſing ſo vile a piece of Heatheniſm.*

October 30, 1686.

A Teſtimony againſt ſeveral Prophane and Superſtitious Cuſtoms, &c.

CHAPTER I.

Againſt Health-Drinking. *The Deſinition of an* Health. *Reaſons to prove the Unlawfulneſs of* Healthing. *That Practice is amongſt the* Reliques of Heatheniſm *It was in its firſt Inſtitution abominably* Idolatrous. *Its* Original *is from Hell.* *'Tis an* occaſion *of much* Sin. Health-Drinking *as uſually practiſed, is againſt* Charity, Juſtice, *and* Reaſon. *Wiſe, Sober and* good Men *have utterly condemned it.* *The Tremendous* Judgments *of God upon Notorious* Heathens *not to be ſlighted.* *Several* Pleas *for* Healthing *anſwered.*

IT has been made a Queſtion by ſome, *Why may not Chriſtians Drink or Pledge Healths?* Is there any Sin in ſuch a Practice which hath been uſed by the generality of Mankind, Time out of mind? Now that we may not miſtake in ſtating the Controverſy, it will be needful to enquire into the Nature and Definition of an Health. I ſhall not Enumerate, nor am I willing to Defile my Pen with mentioning the curſed Myſteries and Ceremonies obſerved by ſome Health-Drinkers. *Joh. Fred. Mateneſius* (*a*) in his Book *de Ritu Bibendi ſuper Sanitate Magnatum*, has deſcribed enough of them. An Health is not meerly ones ſaying when he Drinks to another, that he wiſheth the Health of ſuch a Perſon preſent or abſent; Nevertheleſs, where the uſing

Lib. 1.

(*a*) Cap. 5. p. 39.

uſing of ſuch Expreſſions proves any way offenſive, to be ſure *Tutius eſt abſtinere*, it is Charity to forbear them. But *an Health is that which doth Oblige men to Drink ſuch a quantity of Liquor, as an Indication of their Praying for the Health or Proſperity of ſuch a Perſon, or of ſuch a Deſign.*

According to this Deſcription, we conceive, That a Chriſtian ought not, nor can he without Sin againſt God, either Pledge or Drink an Health. And the more eſpecial Reaſons which ſway our Conſciences in this matter, are theſe following.

1. *Chriſtians ought not to retain any Remainders of Heatheniſm.* It is confeſſed by all, that as to Natural Actions which belong to men as men, it doth not follow, that becauſe the Heathen have ſo practiſed it of Old, that Chriſtians who ſucceed them may not do the ſame things. But in Ceremonies and things of a Religious Nature, they are not to be imitated. To *Dedicate a Cup*, or *Conſecrate an Health*, is not an Action purely Natural or Moral. The Worldly and Vain Cuſtoms of the Gentiles are not to be taken up by ſuch as profeſs themſelves to be the Servants of the True God in Chriſt. The Holy Scriptures do clearly, expreſly, and abundantly prohibit all Symbolizing with the Heathens, *Levit.* 20. 23. *You ſhall not walk in the manners of the Nations.* See alſo *Chap.* 18. *v.* 2, 3. and *Jer.* 10. 2. *Learn not the way of the Heathen. Pſal.* 106. 35. *They were mingled among the Heathen, and learned their Works. Ezek.* 11. 12. *You have done after the manner of the Heathen that are round about you. Matth.* 6. 7. *Uſe not*, &c. *as the Heathen do. Rom.* 12. 2. *Be not conformed to this World. Eph.* 2. 2. *In time paſt you walked according to the Courſe of this World.* And *Chap.* 4. 17. *This therefore I ſay and Teſtify in the Lord, that henceforth you walk not as other Gentiles walk in the Vanity of their Mind. 1 Pet.* 1. 14. *As Obedient Children, not faſhioning your ſelves according to the former Luſts, in your Ignorance.* And *Verſe* 18. *Redeemed from your vain Converſation, received by Tradition from your Fathers.* And *Chap.* 4. 3. *The times paſt of our Lives may ſuffice us to have wrought the Will of the Gentiles.* I have produced theſe Scriptures to prove that there ought to be a difference between Chriſtians and other men; And that *Non-Conformity* to the Heatheniſh cuſtoms of the World is by the Lord himſelf enjoyned upon all his Servants. But that the impleaded Healthing was not firſt practiſed among ſt the People of God, whether

ſhier Chriſtians or Jews of Old, is paſt all diſpute; Learned men, who have written on this Subject, ſhew how it is amongſt the *Reliques of Paganiſm*, which has through the Papacy exonerated it ſelf into the ſink of a decaying World. Inſtead of many, I ſhall only produce *Auſtin's* Teſtimony, which does ſufficiently confirm what has been aſſerted. (*b*) His words are theſe, *Illa fœda & infœlix Conſuetudo, per quam grandi Menſurâ, ſine Menſurâ, ſolent bibere, de Paganorum obſervatione remanſit; Ideò tanquam Venenum Diaboli de veſtris Conviviis reſpuatis.* That filthy and unhappy Cuſtom (ſaith *Auſtin*) of *Drinking Healths is a Relique of Paganiſm*, and let Chriſtians baniſh it from their Feaſts and Tables, as the Poyſon of the Devil. Thus has the great *Auſtin* expreſſed himſelf above 1200 years ago. Health-Drinkers may call him a *Phanatic*, if they pleaſe.

(*b*) *De Tempore, Serm.* 131.

2. *That Practice which was in its firſt Inſtitution abominably Idolatrous, and which has ſtill in it an appearance of Idolatry, ought not at all to be uſed amongſt Chriſtians.* The firſt and great Commandment of the Moral Law confirms this Propoſition; and ſo do all thoſe Scriptures which require men to flee from Idolatry, and not to tolerate any *Remainders or Remembrances of Idolatry* amongſt them; The Holy Word of God abounds with Precepts of this nature. See *Pſal.* 16. 4. *Iſa.* 2. 18. *Zeph.* 1. 4 1 *Cor.* 10. 14. 1 *Theſ.* 5. 22. But this Healthing was in its firſt Inſtitution abominably Idolatrous. No man that has made it his concern by Reading to enquire into theſe things, can be Ignorant, that the Heathen, who were the firſt Healthers, did at their Feaſt Drink an *Hauſtum Salutis*, firſt (*c*) to their Gods, and then to their Patrons and Friends. Particularly, They had one Cup which was Ποτήριον Διὸς σωτῆρος, An Health to *Jove*; another that was τῆ ἀγαθῆ δαίμονος, which did imply a Prayer to Fortune——*Te, Fortuna, Deam facimus, Cœloq; locamus*; than which there cannot be more hateful Idolatry. From *Ethnic's* ſome Idolatrizing *Chriſtians* have learned to Drink Healths to Angels, and to the Souls of departed Saints; But ſhall men that profeſs the True Religion, do any thing that ſhall ſeem to be a Symbolizing with ſuch Idolaters? The Health-Drinker ſeems to Worſhip the Object of that Health. *Fabio, Sacrum libavit Honorem.* It is well ſaid by (*d*) Biſhop *Hall*, *That an Healther by his Forms of Ceremonious quaffing, does make himſelf a Beaſt, while he makes a God of others.* And do not thoſe Ceremonies of *putting off the Hat*, and *Kneeling*, frequently

(*c*) *V. Athen. Diphnoſoph.* l. 2. Cap. 1. *Olaus Magnus*, Lib. 13. Cap. 37. *Alexander ab Alex. Gen. Dier.* l. 5. c. 21. *Bullinger de Conviviis*, l. 3. c. 34. *Demſter. Antiq*; lib. 5. cap. 30.

(*d*) *In quo vadis.* Sect. 21. p. 685.

frequently practiſed by Health-Drinkers intimate ſome kind of Adoration? Beſides, for any man to make his *Drinking* to ſignifie an Invocation of the Name of God, or *to be the Amen of a Prayer*, declaring his Deſires that ſuch a Perſon may have Health, is Superſtition, and falls under the Idolatry forbidden in the Second Commandment. An Health is indeed a *Profane Sacrament*. Hence are thoſe words of *Ambroſe*, *Quid memorem Sacramenta! Bibamus pro Salute Imperatorum.* Amongſt the *Gentiles* of old, Healthing did imply Sacrifice and Prayer.

3. *That which had its Original from Hell, ſhould not be practiſed by Chriſtians, whoſe Converſation ought to be in Heaven.* This is ſo clear a Propoſition, as that I ſhall not uſe Words to confirm it. He muſt be an Atheiſt to a Prodigy, that ſhall contradict it. But *the Impleaded Healthing had its Original from Hell.* This is not my ſingle Apprehenſion. Very Learned and (‡) Judicious writers affirm that the Devil himſelf was the firſt Author, Inſtitutor, and Inventor of Health-Drinking. It was in its firſt riſe uſed as a *Drink-Offering* to Satan. There were among the Jews of old, Drink-offerings poured out to the True and Holy God, being part of the Ceremonial Worſhip, once of Divine Inſtitution. *Gen.* 35. 14. *Exod.* 29, 40, 41. And a *Cup of Healths* Pſal. 115. 15. כוס ישועות which in their ſolemn Thankſgivings the Maſter of the Feaſt (*e*) holding in his hand before the Lord, did praiſe him for all his Salvations. And in (*f*) imitation hereof, Satan who takes Pleaſure in Corrupting the Worſhip of God, and arrogates to himſelf a Divine Service, cauſed the Blind Gentiles, (whoſe God he was) to honour him with *Healths and Drink-offerings.* In thoſe Dark and Diſmal Ages which paſſed before the Sun of Righteouſneſs aroſe over the Earth, all the Nations of the Word (excepting *Iſrael*) worſhipped the Dragon. And *Healths* were one part of that Sacrifice and Service which the Gentiles honoured *Beelzebub* with. The Apoſtle ſpeaks of *the Cup of Devils* 1 *Cor.* 10. 21. Amongſt the Devils Cups there was a *Poculum in Delibatum* (as *Minutius Fœlix* calls it) out of which they drank to their Gods, and by ſaluting them in that way, manifeſted a Religious Adoration of thoſe Infernal ſpirits. *Cherſias* in *Plutarch* (*g*) intimates that the great God *Jupiter* (and we know who was the *Jupiter* worſhipped by the Heathen) made a Feaſt for the Inferior Gods, and poured Wine into a Cup, and enjoyned them in a Courſe to Drink

(‡) *Lege Voetium de Santeis.*

(e) *Jarchi. V. Medi operaſ.* 483.

(f) *Voetum Diſp. Sel. part.* 4. *ubi de Senteis* p. 500. *Matenefius* p. 58.

(g) *In Conviv. Septem Sapientum.*

Drink it off. *Basil* in one of his (*h*) Sermons, sheweth that the Heathen *Grecks* had in their Feasts a Master of Healths; One that should see that each of the Guests did drink off the Cup of Wine presented to him in his Course and Order. *And of this Law* (saith he) *the Devil himself was the Author.* And hence it comes to pass that Satan is so much delighted with Healths,; He may well, when Homage is done to himself thereby. He rejoiceth to see miserable Mortals taken with that which was his Device, invented on purpose to Debauch mankind, and as an Engine for their Destruction. I omit here that which *Delrio* and (*i*) others have related from the Confessions of sundry detected Magicians, *viz.* that in the Conventicles and Festivals of Witches they are wont to carouse Healths in honour to *Beelzebub* and his Inferior *Cacodæmons.*

(h) *de Ebrietate.*

(i) *Mateſius ubi supr.* c. 8.

4. *It is the unquestionable Duty of every Christian to avoid the Occasions of Sin as much as may be.* The Commandment which forbids such a Sin, requires that men take heed of the Occasions and Temptations leading thereunto. *Prov.* 5. 8. & 23. 31. *Eph.* 5. 11. A Christian ought not only to shun the Occasions of Sin himself, but to be careful not to cast an Occasion of sinning before his Neighbour. This is that *Scandalizing* or *Giving Offence* to others which the Holy Scriptures do so often caution men against. *Scandalum est quod inductivum Peccati.* He that is drawn into Sin, is offended and made to fall. Christians ought not to omit a Duty, lest others should from thence take Occasion to sin; but they should forbear many Indifferent things, when the Practice of them will become an Occasion of Evil, *Rom.* 14. 20, 21. The holy Apostle saith, *If meat make my Brother to offend, I will eat no Flesh while the World stands, lest I make my Brother to Offend.* 1 *Cor.* 8. 13. supposing what must not be granted, that the Drinking of an Health is in it self of an Indifferent nature; Nevertheless, if it become an Occasion of much Sin, that Practice ought to be wholly laid aside. But that the impleaded Healthing has occasioned a World of Iniquity to be committed needs no Proof. It occasions Gods name to be Dishonoured with respect to the Abuse of his Creatures, and so is a Breach of the Third Commandment. It has occasioned the Sin of Drunkenness more than a thousand millions of Times. When wicked men intend a Debauch, they are wont to begin with an Health. *Wendelin* testifieth that among the *Germans*, they set an Health a going,

ing,

ing, *Ebrietatis conciliandæ gratia*, that so they may have a Drunken bout. The Ancients have called Healthing, *The Devils shooing-horn whereby he draws on Drunkenness.* The most Judicious *Ames* (*k*) observes, that it is one of the *Mysteries of Bacchus* whereby men are artificially and cunningly drawn into an Excess of Drinking. And it has been the Cause of infinite Quarrels. The rude Complement of the old Health-drinkers in *Polonia*, (*l*) was, *Aut mihi præbibe, aut mecum armis decertato.* There is too much of that *Genius* in many Healthers still. It would be Endless to speak of all the Vain words, Censures, and wicked Reproaches, nay Oaths and Blasphemies, which have been the natural and woful fruit of Health-Drinking.

(*k*) *Cas. Consc.* l. 3. c. 16.

(*l*) *Gaugnnius de Rebus Polon.*

5. *Healthing, as usually practised, is against the Rules of Charity, Justice, and Reason.* He that puts another upon Drinking such a quantity of strong Liquor, when perhaps he has enough and too much already, does not shew that Charity either to his Neigbours Soul or Body which the Rule requires. And *Wo to him that giveth his Neighbour drink: that puts his Bottle to him and makes him drunk also, Hab.* 2. 15. Men pretend Charity to another in Drinking his Health, whereas many times thereby they Destroy their own and their Neighbours too. That witty *Epigrammatist* saith true, (*m*)

(*m*) *Owen part.* 1. *l.* 2. *Epig.* 42.

"*Una Salus Sanis nullam potare Salutem,*
"*Non est in potâ vera Salute Salus.*

And equal Draughts of Wine imposed on all persons are contrary to the Rules of Distributive Justice. That may be Beneficial to one that would be Banefull to another, according to the Tempers or Distempers of mens Bodies. And it is an unjust and Tyrannical Invasion on the Liberty which belongs to every one both as a Man and as a Christian, when he is obliged to Drink more, than his present Appetite inclines him unto. And it is against Reason for a man to drink for anothers Health. Suppose he should be required to Eat a Pound of Flesh, or of Cheese, when he is not Hungry, and that for the Health of his Friend, How Irrational would the Proposal be? And it is no better when a man that is not athirst is required to Drink a Pint of Liquor for anothers Health. This is worse then brutish Folly. An Ox or an Horse

Horſe-will not drink more then ſufficeth Nature. A Learned (*n*) man relates a Facetious Paſſage concerning a notorious Health-drinker, who having continued drinking *Healths to the honour of Saint John*, till his Wits were wet-ſhod; as he returned home, riding through a Brook, he bad his Horſe drink to the Honour of Saint *John*, but the Beaſt not being thirſty, would drink nothing. And the Drunken man had ſo much Reaſon left in him as to confeſs, *Certè Equus eſt me ſapientior*, that his Horſe that would drink no Healths, was wiſer then his Maſter. *Quantò melior Ebrioſis Canis & Aſinus*, ſaid *Chryſoſtom* of old in one of his Homilies. When *Glareanus* was importuned by ſome to drink more then he had an Appetite unto, (*o*) He put them off with that Anſwer, *Num iſto Cane inſipientiorem ne vultis?* A Brute has more wit then to do ſo.

(*n*) *Voetius ubi ſupr.* p. 500. *ex Buſchio.*

(*o*) *Matheſius* L. 1. C. 10.

6. *That which Wiſe, Sober, but eſpecially Good men, have utterly diſliked, may well be ſuſpected as Evil, and Chriſtians ſhould be careful how they comply with ſuch a Practiſe.* But this is true of *Health-drinking*. Some of the wiſeſt men in the World have manifeſted their great Diſlike thereof. *Charles the Great* made a Law to puniſh ſuch of his Souldiers as ſhould Compel or Invite any to drink an Health. Likewiſe the Emperors (*p*) *Maximilian* and *Charles* V. did ſeek to Reform that Evil Cuſtome, emitting Edicts for the Puniſhment of ſuch as ſhould be found guilty of it, and exhorting Miniſters to preach againſt it. Popiſh Authors are generally lax *Caſuiſts*, yet ſome of them have had ſo much of *Morality* in them, as to write againſt the Impleaded Healthings. So does *Joh. Fred. Matheſius*, withal reflecting on the *Proteſtant Profeſſion*, becauſe *Healths* are ſo rife amongſt thoſe that go under that Name. But he might have conſidered that *Papiſts* are no leſs guilty. Alſo, *Sanctius*, *Serrarius*, *Leſſius*, *Boenartius*, *Canonhierus*, *Chavaſſius*, notwithſtanding their being Papiſts, have diſliked this Heatheniſh Cuſtom. Yea, Pope *Innocent* III. (*q*) made a Decree againſt it, withal ordering, that if any of the Clergy ſhould be proved guilty of Healthing, He ſhould be ſuſpended *ab Officio & Beneficio*, without giving due Satisfaction for his offence. And not only Chriſtians but moral Heathens have baniſht Healths, from their Tables, and out of their Feaſts. We have one great inſtance of it recorded in the Scripture.

(*p*) *Beat. Rhenan. Rerum German. Lib.* 2.

(*q*) *Citante Matheſio* p. 3.

When *Ahaſuerus* made a mighty Feaſt, according to the ſtate of the Emperor of *Perſia*, the Drinking was according to the

the Law, *None did compel, for ſo had the King appointed to all the Officers of his houſe, that they ſhould do according to every mans Pleaſure, Esther* 1. 8. *Lyra* (a Chriſtianized Jew) in his Commentary on thoſe words does juſtly inveigh againſt the *Health-drinking* practiſed by Chriſtians. And well may he, when there are *Perſians* and Heathens to riſe up in Judgment againſt them. The ἐγκωμιαστοσία of the Licentious *Greeks* was once diſliked by the Grave *Romans*; *Tully* (*r*) writes that *Circumpotation* (*i. e. Health-drinking*) was abrogated by the Roman Laws. Afterwards indeed they did relapſe into that vice again, as bad as ever. Yet ſome of their Poets did ſatyrically reprove it, ſtyling the Rites about Health-drinking (*s*) *Mad Laws.* I pretermit other Inſtances of men who had only the Light of Nature to direct them, and yet looked upon this Healthing as an unreaſonable Cuſtom, and that which had a tendency to corrupt good manners.

(*r*) *de Legibus Lib.* 2. *propè finem.*

(*s*) *Horat. Serm. Lib.* 2. *Sat.* 6.

He that would ſee more may peruſe what Mr. *Prin* (*t*) has written on this Subject. But men truly fearing God have much more abominated this ill Cuſtom. The Scripture ſaith, *Walk in the way of Good men, and in the Path of the Righteous, Prov.* 2. 20. Are the greateſt Healthers good men? Would any one be willing to have his Soul gathered with theirs when he muſt leave this World? Sound Chriſtians in the primitive Times were no Health-drinkers. It is indeed manifeſt by one of *Nazianzens* Orations againſt *Julian*, that ſome looſe Chriſtians in thoſe days did drink Healths in a Pretended Honour to Chriſtianity, as the *Pagans* did to their Gods, and great ones. And we ſee by what *Auſtin* complains of, that ſome would drink at the Sepulchers of the Martyrs in Honour to them. Though in truth, they could not reproach the Martyrs and Chriſtianity more then by thus Paganizing. But the Serious and True Primitive Chriſtians refuſed *Healths*, for which the Heathen exclaimed againſt them, as if they wanted due Devotion to their Emperors. Hence the Ancient and Famous Teachers in the Chriſtian Church have teſtified againſt this Iniquity. So *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and *Baſil* amongſt the *Greek* Fathers (as they uſe to be ſtyled.) So *Ambroſe*, *Auſtin*, and *Jerom* amongſt the *Latins*, whoſe ſayings are largely recited by Mr. *Prin*, Mr. *Bolton*, and others. And amongſt modern Proteſtant Divines it were eaſie to produce a cloud of Witneſſes in this cauſe. *Voetius*, *Ritterſhuſius*, *Loccenius*, *Teeling*, *Taffin*, *Crocius*, and I know not how many beſides. Amongſt

(*t*) *In his Healths Sickneſs*, p. 40, 41. *And in his Hiſtrio-maſtix.* paſſim.

mongſt our *Engliſh* writers, Dr. *Ames* (a man for his learned Works deſervedly famous in all Proteſtant Churches) Mr. *Downham*, Mr. *Bolton*, Mr. *Gataker*, Mr. *Ward*, Mr. *Harris*, Dr. *Hall*, and Mr. *Thomas Hall*, have witneſſed againſt this Evil: Mr. *Geree* has alſo publiſhed a Treatiſe diſcovering the Vanity and Iniquity of it. The late famous Judge *Hale* (*u*) made a Solemn vow to God that he would never drink an Health as long as he lived; which vow he kept to his dying day. None could prevail with Him to drink ſo much as the King's Health, though but for one time. For which cauſe ſome indecent men unworthily charged that Noble and truly Loyal perſon with *obſtinacy*.

(*u*) *See his Life*, p. 39

Theſe things ſufficiently prove that they are miſtaken, who think that only a few Silly and Humorous men have diſapproved of *Healths*. Some who have been Fooliſh and Vain to a great Exceſs, upon their growing Wiſe have utterly left their Health-drinking, with bitter Sorrow that ever they had been ſo Fooliſh. The Repentance of Mr. *Francis Cartwright* (mentioned by (*w*) Mr *Bolton*) was many years ago publiſhed, wherein he hath this Expreſſion, *It now wounds me to the Heart to think of my Drinking Healths.* It may be when men come to have real Viſions of Eternity, or when they lye upon Death-beds, they will repent of this their way which has been their Folly.

(*w*) *In his Directions for walking with God*, pag. 205.

7. *The tremendous Judgments of God which have befallen notorious Health-drinkers, are not to be ſlighted:* Many Authors worthy of Credit have taken notice of this. *Schuſſelbergius* in his (*x*) Epiſtles hath ſeveral awful examples of the tremedous Vengeance of Heaven which fell upon ſome wicked Scholars as they had been drinking Healths. Mr. *Ward* in his *Wo to Drunkards*, hath ſix or ſeven Inſtances of miſerable men who died before their Time, by means of this Iniquity. A great Healther had once a Ring given to him with this Poeſy in it, *Drink and Dy*. So has many a wretched Healther done. He hath Drunk and Dyed. Yea, with his Healths drunk his Soul into thoſe Flames, which (as one ſpeaks) all the Ocean can never quench, though he ſhould health it down. Memorable and fearful was that Inſtance of Mr. *Richard Juxon* (once a Fellow of *Kings-College* in *Cambridge*) who as he was drinking and Healthing fell down dead in a moment; and his Carcaſe immediately ſo corrupted as that the ſtench of it was inſufferable, inſomuch that no houſe would receive it. *Alexander the* (*y*)

(*x*) *Citante* Voetio *Diſp. v.* 4. *p.* 513.

(*y*) *Dicente Great Athenæus.*

Great killed himſelf with drinking an Health out of *Hercules* his Cup. Moſt Tragical is the Relation concerning 20 of the chief Princes in *Pomerania* (*z*) who were all of them poyſoned to Death in one day, becauſe they did not refuſe to drink King *Popelus* his Health, when the Queen (who had prepared the Poyſon) urged them to it.

(*z*) *Camerar. c.* 12. *Cent.* 12.

But let us conſider a little the chief *Pleas* and Arguments which are made uſe of to juſtifie this unhappy Cuſtom.

1. Some argue, *If a Remembrance of an abſent Friend, when one drinks, is lawful, then an Health is ſo; But you are not ſo humorous as to ſcruple that.* Anſw. The Conſequence is denied. For a Remembrance and an Health are not the ſame. The Primitive Chriſtians (*a*) had their *Pocula Amicitiæ*, which was the ſame thing with our Drinking one to another, and Remembring our abſent Friends. But they had no Healths among them, as we have ſhewed. In a Remembrance (as it is called) a man is not obliged to drink up the whole Cup. Nor is the Perſon to whom he drinks obliged to pledge him, except he ſeeth cauſe. He is left to his Liberty to Pledge where, and in what, and how he pleaſes, which things are contrary to the Laws of an Health. A Remembrance is uſually of Friends and Equals, when as an Health is commonly to Superiors. So that theſe two differ the whole Heaven over.

(*a*) *Clem. Alex. Pædag. l.* 2. *c.* 2.

2. *Some excuſe the Matter by ſaying, They do not compel others to Pledge them when they drink an Health. Anſwer,* This is ſo far well. I wiſh all could ſay ſo. Nevertheleſs, It ſhould be conſidered, that the very Beginning of an Health has ſome kind of Compulſion in it. Eſpecially when the *Exorciſm* of a Great Name is added to the health. Every one hath not Power and Courage to withſtand the Temptation of ſuch an Adjuration.

3. There are who excuſe themſelves by pleading, *They are loth to be Uncivil, or that any ſhould take occaſion to think them moroſe and ill-humored. Anſwer,* The Incivility is on their part who urge the health, and not in them who out of Conſcience refuſe it. Nor will any Ingenuous perſon be offended at him who ſhall with Diſcretion and Modeſty decline Pledging an Health. It was not taken offenſively from that noble Stateſman who ſaid, *I'le pray for the Kings Health, and drink for my own.* Nor was the Duke of *Buckingham* diſpleaſed with Dr. *Preſton* for his not complying with the *ceremonies of an Health*, but miſliked the incivility of the

the Perſon that would have impoſed it. Nor was *Alexander* offended at the Philoſopher who told him, He was not free to drink his *Health*, and that for this reaſon, becauſe he had no Deſire to make himſelf ſtand in need of *Æſculapius*, when thereby he could do *Alexander* no good.

4. It is pleaded that the famous *Luther* drank an Health, and other *Good men have not ſcrupled it* Anſw. If *Luther* did any ſuch thing upon his firſt coming out of Popery and Monkery, and before he ſaw the Evil of it, none ought to alledge his example to juſtify an unlawful deed. Nor is it certain that *Luther* did thus after his Converſion. Proteſtant writers do not acknowledge the fact, when it has been objected to them. Only ſome Popiſh Authors tell a Story of a Prodigious Health which *Luther* drank to *Iſlebius* the German Antimonian. But the Papiſts have invented a thouſand lies, not only of *Luther*, but of *Zuinglius* and *Calvin*, and other great Reformers, in Deſign to caſt an *odium* upon the Proteſtant Religion. Beſides, it is the pooreſt argument that can be, *Some good men have done ſuch a thing, therefore it is lawful.* It was ſhewed before that the Generality of Good men have declined Healths as Paganiſh and Scandalous things. And when any Good men have indulged themſelves in this Practice, commonly it has been for want of Information, concerning the Evil of it. Had they known the true Original, and been convinced of the Superſtition attending this ill Cuſtom, they would never have uſed it. Perſons well inclined will harken to Scripture and Reaſon. And it is chiefly for the ſake of ſuch that I write theſe things. As for ſome who are now become profane and debauched *Health-drinkers*, there is little or no hope of their Reformation. Having lived for ſome time under the powerful Diſpenſation of the Goſpel, but ſinned againſt that bleſſed Light, and alſo rebelled againſt the Light of their own Conſciences, it is to be feared that Gods holy Spirit has taken his Everlaſting leave of them, never more to ſtrive with them, but that they are in a Judicial way given up by the Righteous and Terrible God unto a Reprobate mind, and hard heart. It may be God has ſaid of them, *Their Healthing is their Idol, they are joined to it, and let them alone.* He that is a Profane Health-drinker, let him be an Health-drinker ſtill. And if ſo, (I pray that this may never be the woful caſe of any amongſt us; but if ſo) all that can be ſpoken or written to ſuch perſons will do them no good; nor ſerve to

any other purpoſe, but only to render them the more inexcuſable before the great Tribunal at the laſt day, and to make Eternal Juſtice the more Illuſtrious in their condemnation. And it is a comfort that we know, we are unto God a ſweet Savour of Chriſt, not only in them that are ſaved, but alſo in them that periſh.

CHAP. II.

Againſt Dicing, Cards, *and ſuch like Games. That it is ſafeſt wholly to abſtain from them. The* Lottery *in them makes their Lawfulneſs to be doubtful. Eminently Learned Divines have judged them to be in their own nature Sinful. They are of* Evil Report. *There is a* ſecret Curſe *attending them. They are* offenſive. *It is unqueſtionably Lawful to abſtain from them. As ſuch Games are commonly uſed, they are certainly and hainouſly Evil in the ſight of God. The Evil of Playing for Money: and of miſ-ſpending much Precious Time in ſuch Vanities.*

AS for Games of Hazard and Chance, ſuch as *Dicing and Cards, and ſundry Games at Tables*, there are great Divines (as anon we ſhall ſhew) who judge them to be in their own nature Unlawful. Others ſuppoſe that if the Rules which ſhould be remembred in all Recreations, reſpecting the Time, and Meaſure, and Manner, and the End of them, were duly obſerved, they might without Sin be uſed. Two things we may *aſſert*. 1. That it is beſt and ſafeſt, wholly to abſtain from the Games mentioned. 2. That as they are commonly practiſed, there is much Sin and Provocation to God in them. Both theſe I ſhall endeavour to clear. My firſt Aſſertion is, *That it is beſt and ſafeſt to decline all ſuch Games*; and that for theſe Reaſons:

1. There

1. There is real weight in that Argument, commonly made uſe of by Divines, *from the Lottery which is in the impleaded Games, to prove that they are Breaches of the Third Commandment, and ſo in themſelves Unlawful.* It is granted, that there is Art and Skill mixed in ſome of theſe Games; Nevertheleſs, there is a *Lottery* in them. Now a Lot is a ſerious thing not to be triffled with; the Scripture ſaith not only (as ſome would have it) of *Extraordinary Lots*, but of a Lot in general, that *the whole Diſpoſing* (or Judgment) *thereof is of the Lord, Prov.* 16. 33. *So that when the Lot is caſt, God ſits in Judgment.* The Lot (as Mr. *Cartwright* (a) ſpeaks) is as God's Deputy, who is Judge of the World, and unto whoſe Providence appeal is made to decide the Queſtion. Mr. *Perkins* (who was a man of a very clear and accurate Judgment) well obſerves (b) *that in the uſe of a Lot there are four things*, "The firſt is a Caſual Act done "by man, as the caſting of the Die. The ſecond is the ap- "plying of this Act to the Determination of ſome particular "Controverſy, the ending whereof maintains Peace, Order, &c. "The third is Confeſſion, that God is a Soveraign Judge to "end and determine things which can no other way be de- "termined. The fourth is Supplication, that God would by the "Diſpoſition of the Lot order the Event. Now from theſe Conſiderations, Grave and Great Divines have eſteemed all *Luſory Lots* to be Unlawful. We may not either by Words or Actions invocate the Name, and make Appeals to the Providences of God on every trifling occaſion. As an Oath or Prayer, ſo a Lot is prophaned, when not ſolemnly uſed. A worthy Perſon (c) ſpeaks well to this purpoſe, when he ſaith, *What an Abomination would it be to any Chriſtian to ſee a Pulpit, a Communion-Table, a Font expoſed on a Stage, or the Geſtures of Worſhip aped by Players?* And it is not much better, when men play with Appeals to God, or make themſelves ſport with Lotteries. Whereas ſome have affirmed a Lot fitteſt for trivial matters, their Aſſertion is very unſound. We do not find in the Scripture, that ever a Lot was made uſe of, except in matters of great weight, either in themſelves, or in reſpect of their Conſequences; ſometimes when the matter has not been great in it ſelf, yet to prevent endleſs Contentions and Controverſies, a Lot has been uſed amongſt the Lords People of Old, *Lev.* 27. 32. *Prov.* 18. 18. but not in matters of Diſport. The very Gentiles themſelves thought there was a *Ti Thzion*, ſomething Divine in a

(a) *In locum*

(b) *Caſes of Conſciences.* p. 163.

(c) Mr. Morton *againſt the Gaming humour*, p. 14.

Lot, as is manifeſt from *Jonah* 1. 7. They concluded that ſome *Numen* or *Deity* muſt needs direct their Chance, which (being ignorant of the True God) they did ſuperſtitiouſly aſcribe to Fortune. And do not Gameſters at this day uſe to ſay, *They'll try their Fortune*: And that *they had bad Luck, that Fortune was againſt them*, and the like Paganiſh Expreſſions, by which nevertheleſs they acknowledge a Director of the Chance. This muſt be either God, which if they confeſs, the cauſe is yielded, or a Good Angel by his direction; or an Evil Angel, unto whom they will not own that they make any Appeals, or owe any Subjection. He that makes uſe of a Lot, wholly commits his Affair to a ſuperior Cauſe then either Nature or Art, therefore unto God. But this ought not to be done in a Sportful Luſory way.

2. *Practices, which eminenly Learnedly Divines and Holy Miniſters of God, who are moſt likely to know the Truth, have looked upon as Sinful, it is beſt and ſafeſt to abſtain from them.* But this is true of the Games in queſtion. I know that Popiſh Caſuiſts (who in matters of Morality, as well as in matters of Faith, are many times corrupt) do juſtify the impleaded Games as Lawful. So *Tolet*, *A Lapide*, *Delrio*, and others. Yet Papiſts will not allow of ſuch Games in Eccleſiaſtical Perſons. One of them (*d*) maintains it to be a Mortal Sin for a Clergy-man to play at Cards and Dice. Several Councils have made it a Crime worthy of Excommunication, for a Clergy-men either to Practiſe or to be preſent at ſuch Games. Not only the Canonical, but the Civil Law of Old has ſtigmatized them. Amongſt the Ancients they are reproved with great ſeverity, particularly by (*e*) *Clemens Alexandrinus*, (*f*) *Chryſtom*, (*g*) *Cyprian*, (*h*) *Ambroſe*, (*i*) *Auſtin*. As for our great Reformers, they have generally condemned ſuch Games, as in themſelves unlawful. So *Martyr*, *Gaulter*, *Rivet*, *Taffin*, and *Danæus*, who has written a Learned Diſcourſe on this Subject. The *Dutch* and *French* Miniſters of the *Reformation*, do generally diſapprove of theſe Games; and ſo do our *Engliſh* Divines: In ſpecial Mr. *Cartwright*, Mr. *Perkins*, Dr. *Ames*, Mr. *Fenner*, Mr. *Eaſty*, Mr. *Dod*. Yea, and two Biſhops alſo have teſtified againſt them, *viz*. Biſhop *Babington*, and Biſhop *Downham*. As for Dr *Hammond*, who was a man very corrupt in many of his Notions, and in ſome points of Doctrine, which are of great concernment; I do not judge his pleading for the lawfulneſs of ſuch Recreations worthy the taking notice of; nor can

(*d*) *Ignatius Lopez.*

(*e*) Lib. 3. Cap. 11.

(*f*) Homil. 6. *in* Mat.

(*g*) *Epiſt. de Aleatoribus.*

(*h*) *De Tobia.* p. 590.

(*i*) *Epiſt.* 119.

can I call to mind more then two Proteſtants of Note, who have publiſhed any thing conſiderable in defence of theſe Games. (k) *Balduinus* (a *Lutheran* Caſuiſt) excuſeth them. Alſo, our Learned *Gataker* has taken more pains to prove the Indifference of them, then any I have ſeen. But he writ that Diſcourſe in his younger years; and has been well anſwered by Mr. *Balmford*, and Learnedly refuted by *Voetius*. Yea, and *Mr. Gataker* himſelf, after he had ſaid all he could ſay, wiſheth (l) that men would in Godly Diſcretion abandon ſuch Games, becauſe they are ſo much abuſed, and many are unſatisfied in the lawfulneſs of them.

(k) *In caſibus lib.* 4. *c.* 4. *Caſu* 10.

(l) *Gataker of Lots, p.* 267.

3, *It is beſt and ſafeſt to abſtain from all things which are of evil Report.* The Apoſtolical Rule is, *Whatſoever things are of Good Report*; Practices that will cauſe a man to have a Good name among ſober People, *If there be any Vertue, if there be any Praiſe, think on theſe things.* Phil, 4. 8. which ſheweth that things infamous or of ill report, ſhould be carefully avoided. But ſo are the impleaded Games. The Satyriſt calls the *Dice* by the name of *Alea turpis*. And the Orator brands *Catiline* and *Antony* with this infamy, that they were men that uſed to play at *Dice*. And the generality of good men abſtain from them as evil & infamous things. Are not ſuch Games branded as infamous, when in every Indenture for a Prentice, theſe words are uſual, *At cards, dice, or any other unlawfull and prohibited Games he ſhall not play.*

4. *It has been obſerved by many that there is a ſecret Curſe attending theſe Games.* Hence it is that when perſons have once a little uſed themſelves hereunto, they can know no bounds therein. They are ſo (x) *bewitcht with a Gaming Humor*, as that they will loſe their Friends, Eſteem, Eſtate and every thing elſe that's deſireable, rather then play no more at Cards. Infinite Evils and *Miſeries* have ſprung up from this bitter Root. So that the Tree has been juſtly ſuſpected as not Good, upon which ſuch bad Fruit has grown. (m) *Non facile adducar licitum conſentire, quod tot parturit illicita*, It is then beſt and ſafeſt not to meddle therewith.

(x) *V. Gage ſurvey of Weſt Indies. p.* 282 283. *ca.* 3.

(m) *Bern.*

5. *Theſe Games are offenſive.* And that both to Good and Bad, The Scripture ſaith, *Give none offence neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God.* 1. Cor. 10. 32. But theſe impleaded Games give offence to all. Good men are grieved at ſuch Practices as in their Conſciences are unlawfull. And many Carnal ones are hardened in their Profuſeneſs and Profaneneſs when they hear of any that ſeem to be Religious

ligious in other things, to do in theſe matters as they do; though perhaps not altogether in the like Degree.

6. *If there were nothing elſe to be ſaid, but that the lawfulneſs of ſuch Games is doubtfull, that's enough to make wiſe men to abſtain from them.* Suppoſe it could not be clearly proved that they are abſolutely and in their own nature ſinfull, yet if the matter be any way diſputable, tis Beſt & Safeſt to keep clear of them. Iam ſure there is no ſin in not playing at Cards and Dice. And then as long as there are other Recreations enough, concerning which there is no Doubt of their Lawfulneſs; it is beſt to deſiſt wholly from them that are Doubtful, and make uſe of others. Theſe things make good what I firſt propoſed. My ſecond aſſertion, is, *That the impleaded Games, as commonly practiſed, are unqueſtionably ſinful and provoking to God.*

1. *It is common for ſuch Gameſters to play away their Eſtates, or to get other mens Eſtates in this way, both which are exceeding ſinfull.* When God has poſſeſſed a man of an Eſtate which he has a juſt Title unto, now for him to make it a Queſtion whether this Eſtate ſhall be his or another mans, and then to decide the controverſy by the ſhuffling of Cards or the caſt of a Die, is unworthily to abuſe the good Providence of God, and ſo to tranſgreſs the third Commandment. This is alſo to break the 8th Commandment in a very High Degree. To get another mans goods, at an under price is injuſtice and theft, and clearly againſt the Rule of Righteouſneſs, how much more to take from another his Money, and give him nothing at all in lieu thereof? It is a crying ſin! Who can, who dare pray to God to bleſs his endeavours to get an Eſtate in this way? Moſt certainly the Holy God who hates Robbery for Burnt-offering, would not hold the man guiltleſs that ſhould thus take his name in vain: whenas all lawfull wayes of adding to our Eſtates may and ſhould be prayed over. That worthy and truely Religious Gentleman Mr. *John Bruen* (ſee his life written by Mr. *Clark* p. 91.) was wont to ſay, that ſuch *Gameſters and Thieves were of the ſame Corporation, & the more cunning men are in that Art, the more wicked.* And a late writer obſerves that *Money gotten by Gaming is like the goods of them that dye of the plague, which commonly bring a Peſt with them.* He that ſhall add but a little to his Eſtate by getting money from another in any ſuch unrighteous way, will perhaps find that little to be like a Moth that ſhall conſume, and bring a ſecret Blaſt of God upon all that he enjoyes. And *He that gets Riches and not by Right* (the man that gets a ſumm of Money by playing at

at Cards, has gotten Riches and not by Right) *He ſhall leave them in the midſt of his Dayes, and at his end be a Fool.* Jer. 17. 11. I would ſeriouſly adviſe all ſuch perſons, ſo far as they are capable, to return back their ill gotten goods again, as ever they deſire pardoning Mercy at the Hands of God againſt whom they have grievouſly ſinned. That ſaying of *Auſtins* is well known, and generally approved of, *Non tollitur peccatum, niſi reſtituatur ablatum.* He that has in a way of unrighteouſneſs taken from another any part of his Eſtate, has no reaſon to expect the remiſſion of his ſin, until ſuch time as he ſhall make reſtitution to the party wronged by him, ſo far as he is able to do it.

2. *A world of precious Time (more precious then all mens Eſtates) is commonly ſpent in theſe vain and vexatious ſports.* For a Chriſtian to uſe Recreations is very Lawfull, and in ſome caſes a great Duty, but to waſte ſo much Time in any Recreation, though never ſo innocent and laudable, as Gameſters uſually do at Cards and Dice, and Tables, is haynouſly ſinfull. Every mans Eternity in another world, will be according to his improvement of time here. What a ſad account will they be able to give to the Son of God at the laſt Day, who have ſpent a very great part of that Time wherein they ſhould have bin preparing for eternity, in nothing but idleneſs & playes? What can there be more contrary to that Divine Precept of *Redeeming the Time, becauſe the Dayes are Evil?*

Chap.

CHAP. III.

Against profane Christ-mass-keeping. *In the Apostolical Times the Feast of the Nativity was not observed. The very name of* Christmass *savours of superstition. It can never bee proved that Christ was born on December* 25. *It is most probable that the Nativity was in September. The New-Testament allows of no stated Holy-day but the Lords-day. Objections answered. It was in compliance with the Pagan* Saturnalia *that* Christmass Holy-dayes *were first invented. The manner of* Christ-mass-keeping, *as generally observed, is highly dishonourable to the Name of Christ.*

COncerning that practice of Keeping the 25th day of *December* in a stated Anniversary way, as a Festival in pretended honour to our Saviour Christ, and in commemoration of his Birth-day, I shall briefly present a few *Arguments* to the consideration of the Judicious.

1. *In the pure Apostolical times there was no Christ-mass-day observed in the Church of God.* We ought to keep to the primitive Pattern. That Book of Scripture which is called *The Acts of the Apostles*, saith nothing of their keeping Christ's Nativity as an Holy-day. The (*a*) *Centuriators*, and many others take notice that in the first Ages of the New-Testament Church, there were no stated Anniversary Holy-dayes among Christians. *Easter* was kept a long time before the Feast of the Nativity, and yet the Apostles never ordained that, as (*b*) *Socrates* (the most excellent of the Ancient Ecclesiastical Historians) does truely observe. Had there been the least hint of any such day observed in the primitive times, learned *Vossius* would have told the world of it. One (*c*) saith of him, *pergama dextrâ defendi possunt etiam hâc defensa fuissent.* But he acknowledges that the Feast of Christs Nativity was not kept in the first nor yet in the second Century. After Prelatical writers have said all they can say, *Chemnitius* (*d*) his words will be found true, *Anniversarium diem Natalis Christi celebratum fuisse, apud vetustissimos nunquam legitur.* The most

(*a*) *Cent.* 2.
(*b*) *Lib.* 5. *c. cap.* 22.
(*c*) *Voetius in Lsput. de Nativ. Christi. p.* 22.
(*d*) *Contra Conc. Trid. part.* 4 *de Festis. p.* 262.

moſt Auncient writers ſpeak not the leaſt word concerning the celebration of Chriſts Birth-day.

2. *The word* Chriſt-maſs *is enough to cauſe ſuch as are ſtudious of reformation to diſlike what ſhall be known by a name ſo ſuperſtitious.* Why ſhould Proteſtants owe any thing which has the name of *Maſs* in it? How unſuitable is it to joyn *Chriſt* and *Maſs* together? *h. e.* Chriſt and Antichriſt. But what Communion has light with Darkneſs, and what concord hath Chriſt with Belial? 2. Cor. 6. 15. ſome of the Jeſuites *(e)* have adviſed that endeavours ſhould be uſed to keep up their old terms and names, ſuch as *Prieſt*, *Altar*, *Chriſt-maſs*, *Candlemaſs*, and the like, hoping that by means thereof in time the things would follow the Names whereby their memory is preſerved.

(e) So the Rhemiſts.

3. *It can never be proved that Chriſts nativity was on* 25. *of December.* The moſt learned and accurate Chronologers conclude otherwiſe; ſo *Scaliger*, *Lidiat*, *Calviſius*, *Caſaubon*, *Lansbergius*, *Alſtedius*; And the ableſt Divines which this and the laſt age have known, ſuch as *Parcæus*, *Scultetus*, *Spanhemius*, *Hoſpinian*; and of our own nation, *Perkins*, *Broughton*, and innumerable more; yea, ſome of the moſt learned amongſt the Papiſts refer the obſervation of December 25. to Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitution. So *Petavius*, *Suarez*, *Azorius*, &c. The Providence of God has ſtrangely hid the day, perhaps (as concerning *Moſes's* Body) to prevent Idolatry. They that lived 1400 Years nearer to the time of Chriſts Nativity then we do, yet were at a loſs about the day. *Clemens Alexandrinus (f)* (who lived Anno 200.) teſtifieth that in his time there were various opinions concerning it; And he reflects on them as guilty of curioſity who would go about to determine the day of Chriſts Birth. Moreover, when that ſuperſtition of keeping a ſtated Feſtival in commemoration of the day of Chriſts Nativity did firſt obtain in the Church, not the 25. of *December*, but the 6th day of *January* was the time obſerved. Many of the Churches in Ægypt kept the 5th of *January*; And ſo did the Chriſtians of old in Jeruſalem. And the *Armenians* even untill the year 1170. And that ſome belonging to the Latine Church ſuppoſed that to be the true day of Chriſts Nativity, is evident from the *Gloſſa ordinaria*. *(g) Epiphanius* conceived that to be the true time. And ſome of our late writers (in ſpecial *Lansbergius*) are of that opinion. The truth is that the keeping of December 25. came from *Rome*: And it began there after *Conſtantines* time.

(f) Stromat. lib. 1. *p.* 249.

(g) In Eſther. 2.

Nor

Nor would the Græcian Churches comply with it at firſt. *Chryſoſtom* (who flouriſhed *Anno* 400. *circiter*) in one of his Sermons endeavours to excuſe the Novelty of that obſervation, acknowledging that the 25 of December had not been kept amongſt them in *Conſtantinople* above ten years. The Arguments commonly alledged in favour of this day are very inſufficient. The *Prwton Pſeudos*, or original miſtake, which Popiſh Writers (and before them ſome of the Ancients) have laid much weight upon, is, that *Zachary* was the High Prieſt, and that he did Miniſter on the 10th of *Tiſri*, h. e. September 27, whence it would follow that *John Baptiſt* was born in the latter end of *June*, and conſequently that Chriſt's Nativity muſt be in the latter end of *December*. But *Zachary* was not the High Prieſt; nor can it be proved that his Turn to Miniſter was at the time mentioned; nor could the Nativity to a day or a week be from thence demonſtrated, ſuppoſing the premiſes to be indiſputable. There have been ſome who pretend to a miraculous Argument for their 25 of December viz. That of *the Roſe of Jericho*. They have given out that there is at Jericho a Plant like a Roſe, which every year on *Chriſt-maſs-Eve* flouriſhed, and the next day is dry again. *Adrichomius* (*h*) & other Papiſts mention this as a wonderfull teſtimony to their Opinion, of 25 December. But *Belonius* (*i*) has informed us that this is a Monaſtical Impoſture. There is a thorny ſhrub at *Jerico* which bears white flowers; and the nature of that Plant is ſuch, that if the Leaves of it (tho Dry) be moiſtned, they will dilate themſelves and ſeem to flouriſh: which the Monks obſerving, would on Chriſt-maſs-Eve apply water thereunto, and then make Ignorant People believe that this hapned as a ſign of Chriſt's Nativity on that day. Perhaps the ſtory of the *Holy Thorn at Glaſſenburg* in *Somerſet* (*k*) is the Daughter of this Fiction.

(*h*) *In Theatro Terræ Sanctæ.* In Deſcript. Tribûs Benjamin, *numb.* 63. *v.* *C. à Lapide in Syrac.* 24. 18.

(*i*) *De Plantis terræ Sanctæ.*

(*k*) Dr. *Brown vulgar Errors p.* 99 100. *Edit.* 1.

Let it be further added here, that except we could know the hour of the day when our Saviour came into the world, (which no man living does, and it would be ſinfull curioſity to enquire concerning it) it cannot be proved that it was on December 25. This *Suarez* was aware of: And therefore he confeſſeth that if we ſuppoſe Chriſt to be born before midnight, not the 25, but the 24 of December ſhould be celebrated in honour of his Nativity. To conclude (as *Torniellus* does) that Chriſt was born a little paſt Midnight, or (as others ſay) on the ſame day of the week, and the ſame hour of the day in which Adam was created, are curious and bold ſpecu-

lations

lations, which cannot be justified. As for the Astrologers (such as *Petrus de Aliaco*, *Cusanus*, *Gauricus*, *Cardan*, and some more lately) who by their *Horoscopes* and Calculations have undertaken to declare the day and hour of Christs birth, their attempt is justly charged with not only Vanity but Impiety. A late learned (*l*) Astronomer (tho a Jesuite) acknowledges that such Practices are not onely unprofitable, but highly Profane.

(*l*) *Riccioli in Almagest. p. posterior. eom. 1. l. 8. Sect. 2. cap. 20.*

4. *Tho the particular Day of Christs Nativity is now unknown unto the world, yet it seems most probable that He was born in the latter End of September, or in the beginning of October.* There hath been great Variety of Opinions amongst Christians concerning the time of our Lords Nativity. *Paulus de Middleburgo* thinks it was on March 26. But the grounds he goeth on are weak. There were some of old (as *Clemens Alexandrinus* witnesseth) who believed it was on April 22. unto which opinion *Temporarius* seems to incline. *Lydiat* conjectures that the Nativity was on or near May 22. Dr. *Petit* (*m*) thinks it was in the beginning of November. Thus we see that the Providence of God has kept the day secret from the knowledge of men; and it is in vain for any to determine the particular day. Nevertheless, as to the month, a probable Judgement may be made. The Great (*n*) *Scaliger*, (*o*) *Calvisius*, and *L'Empereur* (*p*) conclude that it was in the latter end of September, or the beginning of October. And before them, *Beroaldus*, *Wolfius* and *Hospinian* were of that Judgement. And this suits well with what is recorded of the shepherds, Luke 2. 8. It is not probable that the Shepherds would be abroad watching their Flocks in the Depth of Winter. The moneth of December is by *Hesiod* called *Meis kalepos probatois*, And tho in *Judæa* the summer be hot, yet the winter is cold. Matth. 24. 20. Ps. 147. 17. But in September or October this might well be. (*) Nor is it likely that *Augustus* should enjoyn all his Subjects throughout the whole *Roman World* to travel into their own cities in the midst of Winter, as he did at the Time when Christ was born. *Luke* 2. 1. Moreover, the Feast of Tabernacles, which signified the Incarnation of Christ, was in the seventh moneth. Inasmuch as the Passover typified Christs Death, he was crucified in that moneth. Why then may we not think that since the Feast of Tabernacles typified his Nativity, he was in that moneth born? There were also several other Festivals in that moneth, which might fitly type the Good Tidings of great joy that should be to all People by reason of Christs being born into the world at that

(*m*) *In Chronol. l. 1. cap. 13.*

(*n*) *De Emendat. Temp. l. 5.*

(*o*) *In Chronol. Isag. c. 47.*

(*p*) *In Scholiis ad Iarchiadem ia Dan. 9.*

(*) *Wolphius de Tempore p. 81, 82.*

that ſeaſon af the Year. Llikewiſe in the ſame moneth was th
Ark by *Solomon* brought into the Temple.

From theſe conſiderations, ſome of the Jewiſh Rabbins (
Midraſh Rabba) have concluded that Meſſiah ſhould be bo
in *Ethanim* or *Tiſri*, h. e. in the 7th Moneth. And Mr. *Brought*
(in his Book called the Lords Family) obſerves that the Je
ſcoff at Chriſtians for keeping the Feaſt of Chriſts Nativity
25. of December, ſaying that they place Chriſts Birth in th
moneth of his Conception. And this Opinion has been confirme
(q) *Hamil. in Natal. Domini.* by the practice of the Church in *Alexandria*, who did of o
(as (q) *Cyril Alexandrinus* teſtifieth) keep the Feaſt of *Joh*
Baptiſts nativity on the 28. of *Pharmuth*, h.e. the 23. of o
April. And if Johns Birth was at that time of year, Chri
muſt needs be in September, or October. I ſhall not inſiſt o
the Argument urged by *Scaliger* & *Calviſius* (which ſom
look upon as demonſtrative) taken from the ſeveral courſ
appointed for the Prieſts to Miniſter, becauſe it depen
much upon the teſtimony of *Joſephus*, who does often miſta
in his relating of things. Nor is it certain that Chriſt was born
(*) *Sic argumentat.* Beroald. the year of the world 3947. upon which Foundation the *Sc*
ligeran Argument is built. I ſhall onely add, that (*) Chri
was 30. years old when he entred upon his Publique Miniſtr
Luc. 3. 23. And he continued preaching three years and
half, Dan. 9. 27. ſo that he lived 33 years and an half. A
if ſo (dying at the time of the Paſſover in the firſt moneth
his Birth muſt needs be in the latter End of September, or t
beginning of October.

By this it is appears that *Chriſt-maſs-Keepers* ſpeak the
know not what, when they ſay on the 25 of December
(r) *Voetius in Diſp. de Feſtis. pag.* 1302. *Thou haſt given thy Son to be born this Day*; and to uſe th
expreſſion ſeveral Dayes one after another, is abſurd. A lea
ned Man (r) obſerves that when the Papiſts in their Poſti
ſay of the Feſtival dedicated to the memory of this or th
Saint, *He was born this day*, ſuch Feſtivals are Teachers
Lies, like their graven Images. The like is to be affirme
in this caſe. It is ſaid of *Jeroboam*, that he ordained a Fe
in the Eighth Moneth, on the 15 day of the Moneth, ev
The Moneth that he had deviſed of his own Heart, 1 Kin
12, 33. So has the *Jeroboam, of Rome* ordained a Feſtival t
be kept on the 25th of the 10th Moneth, but it is the Mone
and the day which he has deviſed of his own Heart.

5. *God in his Word has no where appointed Chriſtians t
keep an Anniverſary Holy-day in Commemoration of Chri
Nativity.* It is not a Work but a Word makes one Day mor
Holy

Holy then another. There is no day of the Week, but ſome eminent Work of God has been done therein; but it does not therefore follow that every day muſt be kept as a Sabbath. The Lord Chriſt has appointed the firſt day of the Week to be perpetually obſerved in remembrance of his Reſurrection and Redemption. If more days then that had been needful, he would have appointed more. It is a deep Reflection on the Wiſdom of Chriſt, to ſay, *He has not appointed days enough for his own Honour, but he muſt be beholding to men for their Additions.* The Old *Waldenſes* witneſſed againſt the obſerving of any *Holidays*, beſides that which God in his Word hath Inſtituted. *Calvin*, *Luther*, *Danæus*, *Bucer*, *Farel*, *Viret*, and other great Reformers, have wiſhed that the Obſervation of all *Holidays*, except *the Lords Day*, were aboliſhed. A Popiſh (*s*) Writer complains that the *Puritans* in *England* were of the ſame mind. So was *John Huſs* and *Jerom of Prague* long ago. And the *Belgic Churches* in their Synod, *Anno* 1578. The Apoſtle condemns the Obſervation of Jewiſh Feſtivals in theſe days of the New Teſtament, *Gal.* 4. 10. *Col.* 2. 16. Much leſs may Chriſtians ſtate other days in their room. The Goſpel has put an end to the difference of Days as well as of Meats. And *neither the Pope nor the Church* can make ſome Days Holy above others, no more then they can make the uſe of ſome Meats to be Lawful or Unlawful, both which are expreſsly contrary to the Scripture. *Rom.* 14. 5, 6. All ſtated Holidays of mans inventing, are Breaches both of the Second and of the Fourth Commandment. A ſtated Religious Feſtival is a part of Inſtituted Worſhip. Therefore it is not in the Power of men, but God only, to make a Day Holy.

(*s*) *Fits-Simeon in Britanomachâ*, l. 2. c. 7.

It has been by ſome pleaded, that *Mordecai* and *Eſther* appointed the Days of *Purim*. This was objected by the Papiſts againſt the *Waldenſes* many hundred years ago. And of latter time by *Bellarmin*, *Servarius*, *Bonartus*, and other Papiſts in their Writings againſt Proteſtants. And lately by the Prelates againſt the Non-Conformiſts. There are two anſwers given by our Divines. 1. It cannot be proved that thoſe *Days of Purim* were a Religious Feſtival. Many (*t*) Judicious Authors take them to be no more then *Days of Civil Rejoycing*. They are not called *Holy Days* of *Purim*; nor do we find that there was an Holy Convocation of the People enjoyned on thoſe Days. The preſent Jews do not look upon thoſe Days as Holy; they ſpend them in Feaſting, and in telling merry

(*t*) *Sic Junius. Et alii. V. Laſpy of Engliſh-Popiſh Ceremonies*, p. 55.

merry Stories; and altho few of them do any ſervile work on thoſe Days, yet (u) they confeſs that ſervile labour is not prohibited therein; ſo that it appears to be only a Political Feaſt, not unlike our 5th of *November*. 2. If we ſuppoſe them to be Religious Feaſts, we have reaſon to conceive that they were not of meer Humane Inſtitution. Dr. *Whitaker* thinks that *Mordecai* was Divinely inſpired, or that ſome Prophet was ſent to give order about the Obſervation of theſe Days.

(u) Buxtorf. *Synag. Jud.* c. 24. p. 430.

It is alſo objected, That Chriſt manifeſted his Approbation of the *Feaſt of Dedication*, by his walking in the Porch of the Temple at that Time, *John* 10. 22, 23. And yet that Feaſt was made Anniverſary by *Judas Maccabæus*. But it is anſwered (w) that Chriſt's walking there was no Approbation of the Feaſt. Our Saviour might walk in the Porch of the Temple, and yet not approve all that was done there, at that time. Nor is there the leaſt Evidence of Chriſt's going up to *Jeruſalem*, that ſo he might keep that Feaſt, or that he was preſent at it as a Feaſt. When *Paul* haſted to be at *Jeruſalem* before Pentecoſt, *Act.* 20. 16. it was not to keep that Feaſt, but for other Reaſons. And undoubtedly, if the Feaſt of Dedication was a Tradition of the Elders, Chriſt, who was for Divine Inſtitutions only in matters of Religion, never manifeſted his Approbation of it. When *Solomon* had built the Temple, he made a Feaſt at the Dedication of it, but he did not command that it ſhould be ſtated and anniverſary. The like is to be ſaid of the ſecond Temple in *Ezra* 6. 16. And therefore it may be queſtioned whether *Judas Maccabæus* did not go beyond his Commiſſion, when upon Repairing and Purifying of the Temple after its Defilement by *Antiochus*, he made it a Law that eight Days ſhould be obſerved in a ſtated Anniverſary way, to commemorate that Mercy. Some (x) have truly obſerved, that the *Jews* in their declining times appointed ſeveral Faſts and Feaſts which they had no warrant for out of Gods Word.

(w) *See Mr.* Cawdrey *of Holidays in anſwer to Dr.* Hammond, p. 418. *&c.*

(x) Weems *vol.* 1. *cap.* 3. p. 60.

It is further alledged that the *Jews* did of themſelves ſtate a Faſt on the Fifth Month, becauſe of the Temple's being burnt in that Month, and another Faſt in the Seventh Month, on account of *Gedaliah*'s being then murthered, *Zachar.* 7. 5. *Anſwer.* But theſe were only Temporary and not Perpetual Faſts. Nor did the Lord, when enquired of by them, manifeſt the leaſt approbation of what they did, but rather the contrary.

6. *Chriſtians*

6. *Chriſtmas Holidayes were at firſt invented and inſtitut in compliance with the Pagan Feſtivals, of old obſerved at that very time of the Year.* This (*y*) *Stuckius* has fully cleared. And (*z*) *Hoſpinian* ſpeaketh judiciouſly, when he ſaith, that he doth not believe that they who firſt of all obſerved the Feaſt of *Chriſt*'s Nativity in the latter end of *December*, did it as thinking that *Chriſt* was born in that Month, but becauſe the Heathens *Saturnalia* was at that time kept in *Rome*, and they were willing to have thoſe Pagan Holidays metamorphoſed into Chriſtian. Hence *December* was called *Menſis Genialis*, the Voluptuous Month. Whilſt the *Saturnalian Days* laſted, the obſervers of them were wont to ſend Gifts one to another, which therefore *Tertullian* calls *Saturnalitia*, and *Jerom* giveth them the Name of *Saturnalium Sportulæ*. The like is done by many in *Chriſtmas* time. Again, In the Saturnalian Days, Maſters did wait on their Servants, as (*a*) *Macrobius* and (*b*) *Athenæus* declare. Hence is that of *Horace* ——*Age Libertate Decembri*. The *Gentiles* called *Saturns* time the Golden Age, becauſe in it there was no Servitude, in Commemoration whereof on his Feſtival, Servants muſt be Maſters. (*c*) And that amongſt *Chriſtmas-keepers* in ſome parts of the World, there uſe to be ſuch *Maſters of Miſrule*, is too well known. From theſe Conſiderations not only Proteſtant writers, but ſome Papiſts (*d*) acknowledge that Chriſtmas Holidays ſucceed the Old *Saturnalia* of the Heathen.

Now for Chriſtians thus to practiſe, is againſt clear Scripture, which commands the Lords People not to learn the way of the Heathen, nor do after their manner, *Jer.* 10. 2. *Lev.* 20. 23. *Ezek.* 11. 12. To obſerve the Feſtivals of the Heathen, is one way of partaking with them in their Superſtitions. *Tertullian* in his Book againſt Idolatry, (*cap.* 14.) expreſſeth himſelf after this manner, *Shall we Chriſtians who have nothing to do with the Feſtivals of the Jews, which were once of Divine Inſtitution, Embrace the* Saturnalia *and* Januaria *of the Heathen? How do the Gentiles ſhame us? who are more true to their Religion than we are to ours. None of them will obſerve the Lords-Day for fear leſt they ſhould be Chriſtians: And ſhall not we then by obſerving their Feſtivals, fear leaſt we be made Ethnic's?*

We might take notice of the *Ethniciſm* of this Feſtival in another reſpect. It was the manner of the *Gentiles* to celebrate the Birth-days of their Princes and Patrons.

(*y*) *De Antiq. Conviv.* p. 133.
(*z*) *De Origine Feſtorum Chriſt.*
(*a*) *Saturnal. lib.* 1.
(*b*) *Lib.* 14.
(*c*) *V. Rainold. Lect. libr. Apoc.* p. 1346.
(*d*) Stuckius *Antiq. Conviv.* p. 131.
(*o*) *P. Jovius Hiſtor. L.* 38. *Polydor. Virgil. de Rerum Inventoribus L.* 5. *c.* 2.

And in Imitation of them, Degenerating Christians thought good so far to symbolize with the Customs of the Nations, as to keep the Birth-day of *Christ*, whom they acknowledge to be their Lord and Soveraign.

7. *The generality of Christmas-keepers observe that Festival after such a manner as is highly dishonourable to the name of Christ.* How few are there comparatively that spend those *Holidays* (as they are called) after an *Holy manner*. But they are consumed in Compotations, in Interludes, in playing at Cards, in Revellings, in excess of Wine, in mad Mirth; Will *Christ* the holy Son of God be p'eased with such Services? Just after this manner were the *Saturnalia* of the Heathen celebrated. *Saturn* was the Gaming God. And (as (e) one saith) the Feast of *Christ's* Nativity is attended with such Profaneness, as that it deserves the name of *Saturns Mass*, or of *Bacchus his Mass*, or if you will, the *Devils Mass*, rather than to have the Holy name of *Christ* put upon it. Mr. *Perkins* (f) justly complains that, *The Feast of Christ's Nativity (commonly so called) is not spent in praising God, but in Revelling, Dicing, Carding, Masking, Mumming, and in all Licencious Liberty for the most part, as though it were some Heathen Feast of* Ceres *or* Bacchus *. And *Latimer* in one of his Sermons saith, That *Men dishonour Christ more in the 12 Days of Christmas, than in all the 12 Months besides.* Nor is it to be wondred at, if that Festival be accompanied with much Profaneness and Vanity, when the chief Pleaders for them (yea Dr. *Hammond* (g) himself) are not ashamed to justifie the playing at Cards as lawful for a Divertisement on Christmas Holydays. And is that the way to honour *Christ*? The *Love-Feasts* (though in themselves lawful) which began in the Apostles times, were wholly laid aside amongst Christians, because they had been an occasion of Riotous Abuses. There is much more reason to omit the Observation of Christmas Festivities, which have brought a Deluge of Profaneness upon the World. The Scandal of them calls for their Abolition. The School Doctors affirm rightly, (h) *Etiam Spiritualia non-necessaria sunt fugienda, si ex iis Scandalum oritur.* Things of an indifferent nature, when they become an occasion of Sin, should not at all be used.

(e) *Prin. Histriomastix*, p. 759.

(f) *In his Expositition of the Creed.*

* *See* Gataker *of Lots*, p. 238.

(g) *In his Answer to* Mr. Cawdrey, p. 274.

(h) *Sic* Bannes & Cajetan.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

A Teſtimony againſt ſome other Superſtitions. Concerning New-years-gifts. Candlemas. Shrove-Tueſday. *The Vanity of making* Cakes *on ſuch a Day. The Heatheniſm and Barbarity of* Cock Scalers, *The Superſtition of Dedicating* Days to Saints. *A Lamentation that ever things of this nature ſhould be practiſed in* New-England.

IT is a Cuſtom amongſt ſome, to ſend Gifts one to another on the Firſt of *January*. Theſe were by the *Romans* called *Strenæ*. Amongſt the Heathen of old, the Firſt of *January* was a great *Holiday*, when they began their *New Year*, and worſhipped their God *Janus*. And that in their *New-years-gifts* they intended ſome Honour to the Goddeſs (*a*) *Strenua*, is manifeſted from the name; as alſo from the Practice of *Tatius*, who firſt began the Cuſtom by gathering ſome ſacred Branches out of *Strenua* her Grove. I find that the Ancients (in ſpecial (*b*) *Tertullian* and (*c*) *Jerom*) have reprehended this Cuſtom amongſt Chriſtians as a Paganiſh Rite. That *Boniface*, whom ſome have called the *Apoſtle of Germany*, when he reproved the Germans for obſerving *New-years-day* after the manner of the Heathen, they objected to him, that it was ſo done in *Rome*; whereupon he wrote an Epiſtle to Pope *Zachary*, deſiring that no ſuch Paganiſh Cuſtom might be uſed amongſt thoſe that called themſelves Chriſtians.

(*a*) *V. Auſtin de Civit. Dei. L.4. cap.* 11. & 16. Stuckius *Antiq. Convi.* p. 132.

(*b*) *De Idol. cap.* 14.

(*c*) *In Epheſ.*

Christians. In the *Turonensian* Synod, *Anno* 554. It was declared, That *such as observed the Kalends of* January (*h. e.* New-years-day) *should not be accounted Christians.* In the Synod at *Antisiodorum*, this Custom is severely condemned. Yea, they call New-years-gifts *Strenus Diaboli.* And so does *Alcuinus.* Our famous *Perkins*, in an Epistle to the President and Fellows of *Christ's* Colledge in *Cambridge*, Condemns *New-years-gifts* as impious, because they are Consecrated with the Name of *Janus.*

Concerning *Candlemass*, besides that the Name has Superstition written in the Forehead of it, I shall only add, that *the Feast of the Purification of the Virgin Mary* (*d*) was taken up in imitation of the Festival of the Goddess *Februa*, to whom Pagans did in the beginning of *February* offer burning Tapers, as the Papists now offer to the *Virgin Mary* on this Day at Evening Candles. Let such as retain any of this Superstition, consider whether it be meet for Protestants thus to Imitate Papists and Pagans. The like is to be affirmed of *Shrove-Tuesday.* It smells both of Popish and of Paganish Superstition. Why does it bear the Name of *Shrove-Tuesday*, but because on that Evening deluded Papists go to the Priest to be *shrieved*, or to make Auricular Confession. The *Italians* (*e*) call *Shrove-Tuesday* by the Name of *Bacchanali.* The *Spaniards*, *Fiestas de Baco*, and the *French*, *Bacchanaleries*, which shews that this *Carnival* comes in the room of the old *Bacchanalia* and *Dionisia* of the *Gentiles*; and indeed is kept after the same manner, (*f*) especially in some places. We see it is celebrated with the Observation of sundry Heathenish Vanities. When persons single out that Day to make *Pancakes* in, it is an Heathenish Vanity. The Prophet *Jeremy* speaks of some that did *knead their Dough* to make Cakes *to the Queen of Heaven*, *Jer.* 7. 18. Shall Christians do any thing which shall look like unto a Symbolizing with such Heathenism? The old Pagan Romans (*g*) made *little Cakes* as a Sacrifice to their Gods, these they called *Liba.* And the Heathen *Greeks* made (*Popana*) *Pancakes* as an Offering to their Idols. Especially they did practise this at the time when they celebrated the Feast of *Bacchus*, which (as we have proved) was the Heathens *Shrove-Tide.* *Arnobius* (*h*) of old did zealously testifie against this Heathenism. *Quid Fritilla? Quid Affiria? Quid Gratilla? Quid Conspolium? Quid Cubula?* Whats the meaning (saith he) of your Pultises, of your

(*d*) *V. Hospinian. de Fest. Christianorum* p. 33.

(*e*) See Minshews *Guide into the Tongues.*

(*f*) *V. Hispinian. ubi supra*, p. 37, 38. Stuckius *Antiq. Conviv.* p. 129.

(*g*) Stuckius *de Sacrificiis Gentilium* p. 50. *Pollux*, *Lib.* 6.

(*h*) *Lib.* 7.

your Pancakes, of your Friters, &c. And again, *Quid cum Pultibus Deo ſit, quid cum Libis?* Do you think that God is pleaſed with your Superſtitious Cakes?

Another Vanity attending *Shrove-Tide*, is that of *Cock-ſcaling*. It is agreed amongſt Ancient Hiſtorians, that *Cocks* were brought out of *Perſia* into *Greece*. (*i*) For which cauſe after *Themiſtocles* had obtained a notable victory over the *Perſians*, it was made a Law among the *Athenians*, that once in a year there ſhould be a publick *Cock-fight* in Commemoration of that Victory. If this were the worſt, it were more tolerable, for there is nothing of a Religious Nature in it. But I find that the (*k*) *Cock* becauſe of his fighting Quality was by the Old Gentiles dedicated to *Mars*. Hence *Ariſtophanes* calls him (*Areos neotton*) *Mars* his Bird. And the *Lacedæmonians* were wont to ſacrifice a Cock to their God *Mars*. Our fore-fathers the *Saxons*, called the Third Day of the week *Tueſday*, (*l*) in Devotion to their great Father and Leader *Tuiſco*, whom after his Death they Idolized. The *Germans* now (*m*) call it *Dings-dagh*, *h. e. the Fighting Day*. The Old *Romans*, and from them the *Italians*, *French*, *Spaniard*, and others, have given it the Name of *Mars* his Day. Whether the practice of ſlaughtering Cocks on *Tueſday*, or *Mars* his Day, have not in it ſome of the old Idolatrous Heatheniſm, let every Wiſe and Serious Chriſtian judge. Beſides all this, to delight in tormenting dumb Creatures, and to make a ſport of their Miſeries, is great inhumanity, and a ſcandalous Violation of the Sixth Commandment. No Creature belonging to *this* World would ever have been miſerable, had not the Sin of Man cauſed it to be ſo. And the whole Creation groans to be delivered from that woful Vanity which Man has ſubjected it unto. Wherefore for Men to make ſport with the Griefs and Dolours of miſerable Creatures, is ſuch *Barbariſm*, as a truly Chriſtian Heart cannot but abhor. Such Cruelty is more ſuitable to be acted in the Bloody Theaters of Pagans, then to be ſeen in the Streets amongſt men that call themſelves Chriſtians. I remember a ſerious Paſſage mentioned in the Life of that worthy Miniſter Mr. *John Machin*, &c. He on a time meeting ſome young men that were going to a Cock-fighting, ſaid to one of them, (*n*) *Friends, our Lord and Maſter Jeſus Chriſt, never came into the World to ſet up ſuch ſports as theſe.* Which words ſtruck like an Arrow in the Heart of that young man, and the iſſue was, that he repented, and there

(*i*) *Ælian. Hiſtor. L. 2. c. 28. Demſter, Rom. Antiq. Lib. 3. cap.* 10.

(*k*) Stuckius *ubi ſupra*, p. 47.

(*l*) *See* Verſtegan's *Antiquities* p. 57.

(*m*) *Vide* Minſhew *in Libro ſupra citato.*

(*n*) *See* Mr. Clarkes *laſt Volumn of Lives*, p. 92.

there was a bleſſed change in his whole courſe of life. If the writing of theſe things ſhall have the like Effect on any Reader, my Labour will not be loſt. The Lord grant that it may be ſo. More I need not add on this Subject, only that I find in the Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline of the Reformed Churches in *France*, *Cap.* 14. *Artic.* 18. that *the keeping of Shrove-Tueſday* is expreſly forbidden.

Concerning the Dedication of *Days* to the honour of *Saints* departed, ſuppoſe *Valentin*, St. *Matthias*, or any other, we have not one Example in the Scripture to warrant ſuch a Practice. The Lords People of old did not ſo. There was no *Holiday* appointed to the honour of *Moſes* or *Joſhua*, or any of the Prophets in the Church of *Iſrael*. Nor was there a *Saints-day* known amongſt Chriſtians, untill ſuch time as the Antichriſtian Apoſtacy and Idolatry begun. Many learned men have proved by (*o*) Teſtimonies out of the Ancients, that the Superſtition of conſecrating Days to the Martyrs, was done in imitation of the *Gentiles*, who dedicated Days in Devotion to their *Heroes*, after their death, and Chriſtians thought to bring the Heathens over to them, by appointing Feſtivals to the honour of Martyrs and other famous Saints. But this looks like worſhipping Saints. And the Truth is, That the Superſtition of praying to Saints departed, came in with that of Inſtituting Days to their Honour. And the Arguments made uſe of by Proteſtants againſt building Altars or Temples for the honour of Saints, are valid in this caſe. Religious worſhip is due to God only, *Matth.* 4. 10. Now that a Feſtival or Holiday is a part of Religious Worſhip, is not only by Proteſtants aſſerted, but by ſome Papiſts (in particular by (*p*) *Durandus* and (*q*) *Bellarmin*) acknowledged. How the Obſervers of ſuch Days can wholly clear themſelves from tranſgreſſing the Second Commandment, I confeſs my ſelf unable to diſcern.

(*o*) Rivet *ſummæ controverſ. Tract.* 2. *quæſt.* 16.

(*p*) *Rationale Divin. l.* 4. *c.* 39.

(*q*) *De Cultu Sanctorum, l.* 4. *cap.* 16.

But my Deſign is not to enlarge on theſe things. What has been ſpoken may ſuffice for a *Teſtimony* againſt the impleaded growing Evils. It is deeply to be lamented, that there ſhould be any need to Preach or to Write againſt any ſuch Vanities here in *New-England*. I can remember the time, when for many years, not ſo much as one of all theſe Superſtitious Cuſtoms was known to be practiſed in this Land. They are good no where; but in *New-England* they are a thouſand times worſe than in another place. Upon which account, there is ſad cauſe to expect, that it will not

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be long before the Holy God will reveal his Diſpleaſure from Heaven againſt them. This has been *Immanuels* Land. *New-England* was and ever ought to be *a Land of Uprightneſs.* But ſhall men do ſuch things in a Land of Uprightneſs, where the Word of God, and the Miniſters of God have taught them better? Is it no Provocation to Defile the Lord's Land? To my knowledge, the firſt Generation of Chriſtians came into this Wilderneſs with hopes that their Poſterity here would never be corrupted with ſuch *vain Cuſtoms.* Ask ſuch of the old Standers as are yet living, if it were not ſo. And the Printed (‡) Labours of ſundry the moſt Eminent of the Fathers in theſe Churches, do in part declare it. But alas! that ſo many of the Preſent Generation have ſo early corrupted their doings! Methinks I hear the Lord ſpeaking to *New-England* as once to *Iſrael*; *I planted thee a Noble Vine, wholly a Right Seed; How then art thou turned into the Degenerate Plant of a Strange Vine unto me!*

(‡) *See Mr.* Wilſons *Sermon on* Jer. 29.8. *p.*6,8,9. *And Mr.* Nortons *Sermon on* Jer. 30.17. p. 12, 13.

FINIS.